Highlights from Recent Cancer Literature

Angiopoietin-2: An Attractive Target for Improved Antiangiogenic Tumor Therapy
Damien Gerald, Sudhakar Chintharlapalli, Hellmut G. Augustin, and Laura E. Benjamin

MEETING REPORT

Ion Channels and Transporters in Cancer: Pathophysiology, Regulation, and Clinical Potential
Stine F. Pedersen and Christian Stock

G-protein Inactivator RGS6 Mediates Myocardial Cell Apoptosis and Cardiomyopathy Caused By Doxorubicin
Juanqi Yang, Biswanath Maity, Jie Huang, Zhan Gao, Adele Stewart, Robert M. Weiss, Mark E. Anderson, and Rory A. Fisher

Trp53 Inactivation in the Tumor Microenvironment Promotes Tumor Progression by Expanding the Immunosuppressive Lymphoid-like Stromal Network
Gang Guo, Luis Marrero, Paulo Rodriguez, Luis Del Valle, Augusto Ochoa, and Yan Cui

Phase I Trial of Recombinant Modified Vaccinia Ankara Encoding Epstein–Barr Viral Tumor Antigens in Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma Patients

Précis: Vaccination of nasopharyngeal carcinoma patients targeting two pathogenic viral antigens produces potent immune responses after they have completed chemo/radiotherapy.

Earlier Detection of Breast Cancer with Ultrasound Molecular Imaging in a Transgenic Mouse Model
Sanitha V. Bachawal, Kristin C. Jensen, Amelie M. Lutz, Sanjiv S. Gambhir, Francois Tranquart, Lu Tian, and Jürgen K. Willmann

Précis: This study lays the foundation for the development of a novel ultrasound-based imaging approach for earlier detection of breast cancer and paves the way for translational clinical trials in the future.

Collections of Simultaneously Altered Genes as Biomarkers of Cancer Cell Drug Response
David L. Masica and Rachel Karchin

Précis: New methods are offered to improve the identification of drug response biomarkers in cancer cells.

Therapeutic Efficacy of Bifunctional siRNA Combining TGF-β1 Silencing with RIG-I Activation in Pancreatic Cancer
Jonathan Ellermeier, Jiwu Wei, Peter Duewell, Sabine Hoves, Mareike R. Stieg, Tina Adunka, Daniel Noerenberg, Hans-Joachim Anders, Doris Mayr, Hendrik Poeck, Gunther Hartmann, Stefan Endres, and Max Schnurr

Précis: The potency of a therapeutic siRNA can be increased by a parallel strategy to combinatorially activate an RNA helicase that triggers inflammatory responses to double-stranded viral RNA, with implications for understanding how to reprogram the tumor microenvironment to destroy tumor cells.
LOX-Mediated Collagen Crosslinking Is Responsible for Fibrosis-Enhanced Metastasis
Thomas R. Cox, Demelza Bird, Ann-Marie Baker, Holly E. Barker, Melissa W-Y. Ho, Georgina Lang, and Janine T. Erler

Précis: The fibrotic status of a metastatic niche that is determined by the extracellular matrix plays a pivotal role in determining colonization of new sites by circulating tumor cells.

Evidence for a Role of the PD-1:PD-L1 Pathway in Immune Resistance of HPV-Associated Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Transcription Factor YY1 Contributes to Tumor Growth by Stabilizing Hypoxia Factor HIF-1α in a p53-Independent Manner
Shourong Wu, Vivi Kasim, Mitsunobu R. Kano, Sayaka Tanaka, Shinsuke Ohta, Yutaka Miura, Kanjiro Miyata, Xueying Liu, Ako Matsushashi, Ung-il Chung, Li Yang, Kazunori Katoaka, Nobuhiro Nishiyama, and Makoto Miyagishi

A Chimeric Receptor with NKG2D Specificity Enhances Natural Killer Cell Activation and Killing of Tumor Cells
Yu-Hsiang Chang, John Connolly, Noriko Shimasaki, Kousaku Mimura, Koji Kono, and Dario Campana

Précis: Findings illustrate how to increase the antitumor efficacy of NK cell therapy, a strategy that may be used to fight nearly any kind of human cancer.

MOLECULAR AND CELLULAR PATHOBIOLOGY

Phosphorylation of Ribosomal Protein S6 Attenuates DNA Damage and Tumor Suppression during Development of Pancreatic Cancer
Abed Khalaileh, Avigail Dreazen, Areej Khatib, Roy Apel, Avital Swisa, Norma Kidess-Bassir, Anirban Maitra, Oded Meyuhas, Yuval Dor, and Gideon Zamir

Précis: Findings reveal that a key mTOR effector molecule is crucial for initiation of K-Ras-induced pancreatic cancers, illuminating the centrality of this mTOR pathway to evade p53-mediated tumor suppression in this setting.
Dormant Cancer Cells Contribute to Residual Disease in a Model of Reversible Pancreatic Cancer


MicroRNA-Related Genetic Variants Associated with Clinical Outcomes in Early-Stage Non–Small Cell Lung Cancer Patients

Xia Pu, Jack A. Roth, Michelle A.T. Hildebrandt, Yuqing Ye, Hua Wei, John D. Minna, Scott M. Lippman, and Xifeng Wu

Precise: This large study of non-small cell lung cancer suggests that miRNA-related polymorphisms can predict clinical outcomes at a level that may be superior to other markers developed previously.

Proliferation-Independent Control of Tumor Glycolysis by PDGFR-Mediated AKT Activation

Cong Ran, Huan Liu, Yasuyuki Hitoshi, and Mark A. Israel

Precise: Findings argue that tyrosine kinase growth factor signaling directly affects glucose metabolism in glioma and is not a secondary response to enhanced proliferation, as suggested in other cancer models.

Genetic Variation in Transforming Growth Factor Beta 1 and Mammographic Density in Singapore Chinese Women

Eunjung Lee, David Van den Berg, Chris Hsu, Giske Ursin, Woon-Puay Koh, Jian-Min Yuan, Daniel O. Stram, Mimi C. Yu, and Anna H. Wu

Precise: Host genetic polymorphisms in a key growth factor in breast cancer may help identify women at an increased risk of breast cancer.

Telomere Length and Telomerase Activity Impact the UV Sensitivity Syndrome Xeroderma Pigmentosum C

Gerdine J. Stout and Maria A. Blasco

Precise: Findings reveal a role for the DNA repair protein XPC in telomere stability and how activation occurs for the ALT pathway of telomere maintenance, a broadly important aspect of tumor formation.

Identification of Inherited Genetic Variations Influencing Prognosis in Early-Onset Breast Cancer

Sajjad Balaq, William Tapper, Andrew Collins, Sobia Khan, Ioannis Politopoulos, Sue Gerty, Carl Blomqvist, Fergus J. Couch, Heli Nevanlinna, Jianjun Liu, and Diana Eccles

Precise: This study maps host genetic variations that affect risks of poor prognosis in early onset breast cancer patients, with implications for how aggressive treatments should be used to improve survival outcomes.

xCT Inhibition Depletes CD44v-Expressing Tumor Cells That Are Resistant to EGFR-Targeted Therapy in Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Momoko Yoshikawa, Kenji Tsuchihashi, Takatsugu Ishimoto, Yoshifumi Yae, Takeshi Motohara, Eiji Sugihara, Nobuyuki Onishi, Takashi Masuko, Kunio Yoshizawa, Shuichi Kawashiri, Makio Mukai, Seiji Asoda, Hiromasa Kawana, Taneki Nakagawa, Hideyuki Saya, and Osamu Nagano

Precise: Cells that express variant isoforms of the stem cell-determining factor CD44 rely on the activity of a cystine transporter subunit that affects redox status and EGFR function.

Focused Ultrasound Delivers Targeted Immune Cells to Metastatic Brain Tumors

Ryan Alkins, Alison Burgess, Milan Ganguly, Giselle Ursin, Woon-Puay Koh, Jian-Min Yuan, Daniel O. Stram, Mimi C. Yu, and Kullervo Hynynen

Precise: Noninvasive MR-guided focused ultrasound allows targeted natural killer cells to circumvent the blood-brain barrier and treat HER2-amplified breast metastasis in the brain.

Caveolin-1–LRP6 Signaling Module Stimulates Aerobic Glycolysis in Prostate Cancer

Salahaldin A. Tahir, Guang Yang, Alexei Goltsov, Ki-Uck Song, Chengzhen Ren, Jianxiang Wang, Wenjun Chang, and Timothy C. Thompson

Precise: This study offers mechanistic insights into how aerobic glycolysis is increased in prostate cancer, possibly revealing critical targets for effective antimetabolic therapy in this setting.
Phenotypic Profiling of mTOR Complex 2 Is Involved in Tumorigenesis

Miriam Martini, Mariangela Russo, Simona Lamba, Elisa Vitielio, Emily Hannah Crowley, Francesco Sassi, Davide Romanelli, Milo Frattini, Antonio Marchetti, and Alberto Bardelli

Precise: Findings support the development of small molecule inhibitors of the kinase MLK4 to treat the significant number of KRAS-mutant colorectal cancers that arise in humans.

A Novel Inhibitor of STAT3 Homodimerization Selectively Suppresses STAT3 Activity and Malignant Transformation

Xiaolei Zhang, Ying Sun, Roberta Pireddu, Hua Yang, Muradi K. Uslan, Harshani R. Lawrence, Wayne C. Guida, Nicholas J. Lawrence, and Said M. Sebti

Precise: STAT3 provides critical support in cancer cells and the immune microenvironment in tumors, but bioactive small molecule inhibitors that offer tractable qualities for clinical translation have been elusive.

Alkaline Phosphatase ALPL-2 Is a Novel Pancreatic Carcinoma-Associated Protein

Pooja Dua, Hye Suk Kang, Seung-Mo Hong, Ming-Sound Tsao, Soyoun Kim, and Dong-ki Lee

Precise: An aptamer selection strategy identifies an enzyme that may be useful for blood-based detection of pancreatic cancer.

mTOR Complex 2 Is Involved in Regulation of Cbl-Dependent c-FLIP Degradation and Sensitivity of TRAIL-Induced Apoptosis

Liqun Zhao, Ping Yue, Fadlo R. Khuri, and Shi-Yong Sun

Precise: Findings show how mTORC2 stabilizes the FLIP apoptotic regulators, thereby connecting mTORC2 signaling to death receptor-mediated apoptosis.

Phenotypic Profiling of DPYD Variations Relevant to 5-Fluourouracil Sensitivity Using Real-time Cellular Analysis and In Vitro Measurement of Enzyme Activity

Steven M. Offer, Natalie J. Wegner, Croix Fossum, Kangsheng Wang, and Robert B. Diasio

Precise: An understanding of the contribution of DPYD alleles to 5-FU toxicity will facilitate the generation of clinically relevant predictive tests and promote the individualization of treatment based on genotype.

TUMOR AND STEM CELL BIOLOGY

Involvement of Lyn and the Atypical Kinase SgK269/PEAK1 in a Basal Breast Cancer Signaling Pathway


Precise: This study addresses a rationale to target basal breast cancers, also known as triple negative breast cancers, which present a major clinical challenge due to their aggressive nature and lack of targeted treatments.

FOX2C Expression Links Epithelial–Mesenchymal Transition and Stem Cell Properties in Breast Cancer

Brett G. Hollier, Agata A. Tinnirello, Steven J. Werden, Kurt W. Evans, Joseph H. Taube, Tapasree Roy Sarkar, Nathalie Sphyris, Maryam Shariati, Sreevedi V. Kumar, Venkata L. Bhattula, Jason I. Herschkowitz, Rudy Guerra, Jeffrey T. Chang, Naoyuki Miura, Jeffrey M. Rosen, and Sendural A. Mani

Precise: Findings of this study suggest a rational new target for anti-EMT therapy of cancer stem cells, perhaps relevant to many types of malignancy.

Characterization of a Novel PERK Kinase Inhibitor with Antitumor and Antiangiogenic Activity

Charity Atkins, Qi Liu, Elisabeth Minthorn, Shu-Yun Zhang, David J. Figueroa, Katherine Moss, Thomas B. Stanley, Brent Sanders, Aaron Goetz, Nathan Gaul, Anthony E. Choudhry, Hasan Alsaid, Beat M. Jucker, Jeffrey M. Axten, and Rakesh Kumar

Precise: Inhibition of PERK kinase, which controls the unfolded protein response (UPR), a near universally elevated process in cancer cells, was also found unexpectedly to affect amino acid metabolism, blood vessel density, and vascular perfusion in tumors.

Genetic Amplification of the NOTCH Modulator LN2X Upregulates the WNT/β-Catenin Pathway in Colorectal Cancer

Jordi Camps, Jason J. Pitt, Georg Emons, Amanda B. Hummon, Chanelle M. Case, Marian Grade, Tamara L. Jones, Quang T. Nguyen, B. Michael Gudahini, Tim Beisierth, Michael J. Difilippantonio, Natasha J. Caplen, and Thomas Ried

Precise: Notch and Wnt signaling pathways are upregulated by overexpression of a ligand for the endocytic adaptor protein Num, a Notch inhibitory protein, coordinately stimulating both of these critical oncogenic pathways in colorectal cancer.
ABOUT THE COVER

Inactivation of the tumor suppressor p53 frequently occurs in tumors and tumor-associated stromal cells. This study shows that p53 dysfunction in tumor-associated stroma of B16F1 melanoma favors tumor establishment and progression by promoting an inflammatory microenvironment. Using immunofluorescence, it was found that lymphoid-like fibroblastic reticular cells, which express ER-TR7 (green), GP38 (red), and α-SMA (blue), were markedly expanded in the tumor microenvironment lacking functional p53. The expansion of this specialized stromal network was associated with augmented myeloid derived suppressor cells and angiogenesis. For details, see the article by Guo and colleagues on page 1668.

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